



USAID | BANGLADESH
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**“American Ally in Development”
Op-Ed by Derrick Brown
USAID Mission Director, Bangladesh
Dhaka, August 19, 2018**

After spending 28 years working across the world in developing countries, I recently arrived in Dhaka as the new Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission. Even in these first two short weeks I can already feel the vibrancy of the city of Dhaka and the friendliness and warmth of the Bangladeshi people.

Just before arriving in Bangladesh, I spent time in Angola where I worked with the government and citizens to deepen democracy, improve economic growth and trade, expand access to health care and clean water, and invest in programs that reduce the impact of disasters.

Now in Bangladesh, I am excited by the prospects of advancing USAID’s long-standing and productive relationship with the Government of Bangladesh and all Bangladeshis to achieve the impressive goal of graduating to a middle income country in the near future. Although Bangladesh is well on its way, there remains much to be done to ensure this positive trajectory continues. We must all work together to strengthen systems and remove barriers to progress, and continue to invest in the innovative people of Bangladesh.

One global challenge I want to highlight is that of Trafficking in Persons. July 30 marked the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, and gives us all an excellent opportunity to reflect on the magnitude of this issue, celebrate the hard work of all those fighting to remove the scourge of trafficking from the lives of those living in Bangladesh, and recognize the scope of the challenge that remains. An estimated 1.5 million Bangladeshis are thought to be living in this modern day slavery as a result of being trafficked. Trafficking in persons is an issue that touches us all, both in the United States and Bangladesh, and it will take commitment from all of us to protect potential victims from the criminals that traffic people.

We at USAID have programs that work with Bangladeshi citizens, the Government of Bangladesh, non-governmental organizations, U.S. and international organizations to prevent this crime and protect its victims, but also prosecute the perpetrators of those that take advantage

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of the most vulnerable. Because that's what it will take – all of us focusing on what we can do together.

Thank you for the warm welcome in your country, and I look forward to working with the people of Bangladesh on their journeys toward ever brighter futures.

To see how you can help in the fight against human trafficking, see our [“15 Ways” factsheet](#).

Derrick Brown is the Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development in Bangladesh.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided more than \$7 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. In 2017, USAID provided over \$212 million to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh through programs that expand food security and economic opportunity, improve health and education, promote democratic institutions and practices, protect the environment, and increase resiliency to climate change.

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